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East Germany

COUNTRY

REPORT NO.

Koethen Airfield

TOPIC

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EVALUATION

PLACE OBTAINED

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DATE OF CONTENT 18 November to 16 December 1953

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REFERENCES

PAGES 3 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

REMARKS

SOURCE

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1. The following air activity and aircraft were observed at Koethen airfield between 18 November and 11 December 1953:

18 November. Between 2:30 p.m. and 3:45 p.m., there was no air activity. The weather was favorable. Ten aircraft including MiG-15s or U-MiG-15s and single-engine monoplanes were parked in the area of the hangars.

20 November. Between noon and 1 p.m., there was no flying. The weather was dull and it rained. Four and 3 MiG-15s or U-MiG-15s were parked in front of the southernmost of the two eastern hangars and in the area of the hangars respectively.

23 November. There was no flying between noon and 1 p.m. The weather was dull. Five MiG-15s or U-MiG-15s were parked in front of the hangars.

24 November. There was no air activity between 12:15 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. The weather was clear and sunny. Six swept-back jet fighters were parked at the field.

25 November. There was no flying between noon and 1 p.m. The weather was sunny.

27 November. No flying was observed between 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. The weather was sunny. Two aircraft were parked in front of the hangars and 1 biplane in front of the flight control station. A heavy motor vehicle with a high antenna mast was observed east of the flight control station.

30 November. There was no air activity between 11:30 a.m. and 1:10 p.m. There was little other activity at the field. Seven MiG-15s or U-MiG-15s were parked in the area of the hangars.

2 December. There was air activity by swept-back jet fighters between 12:30 p.m. and 2 p.m. The weather was hazy in the morning and clear and sunny later on. Six MiG-15s or U-MiG-15s were made ready for take-off

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at one of the dispersal areas. Two of these aircraft taxied to the runway and took off in formation. At the same time other aircraft were aloft. The gates of all three hangars were open. Air activity observed included local flights, extended flights to the west and, for the first time after a prolonged period, diving practices. For the latter practices two aircraft would take-off in formation and climb to an altitude of about 3,000 meters within 3 minutes. Flying a large left bank, the aircraft approached the field in an east-west direction and dived at an angle of about 40 degrees, pulling out of the dive at an altitude of about 600 meters, and climbing again to an altitude of 3,000 meters. The aircraft repeated these practices four times. Source determined [] on one of the landing aircraft. Another aircraft parked at the field was []

3 December. No air activity was observed between noon and 1 p.m. The weather was sunny. The gates of all hangars were open. Thirteen MiG-15s or U-MiG-15s were parked in front of the hangars. Between 3 p.m. and about 11 p.m. there was flying at the field.

5 December. Between 12:15 p.m. and 1:30 p.m., no air activity was observed. The weather was sunny. At 1:10 p.m. a biplane landed at the field.

7 December. There was no air activity between noon and 1:30 p.m. The weather was cloudy. Six MiG-15s or U-MiG-15s were parked in front of the hangars.

8, 10 and 11 December. No flying was observed. There was dense fog.

9 December. There was no air activity between noon and 1 p.m. It rained. 1

2. On 30 November, about 200 crates, each 40 x 60 x 25 cm, were piled up in the open near the ammunition dump. A tractor and thick boards were also observed there. 2
3. On 20 November, a train consisting of 15 converted boxcars and 4 flatcars without locomotive was observed on the spur track of the airfield. No activities were going on at the train. At 1 p.m., the train had been removed from the spur track. 3
4. About noon on 20 November, about 30 soldiers with red-bordered black epaulets received instruction by an officer in the southeastern portion of the field between the fence and the aircraft revetments. At the same place, about 30 soldiers with red-bordered black epaulets drilled on 7 December.
5. On 27 November, source counted 13 aircraft revetments along the southern edge of the field between the AA gun emplacement and the western boundary of the field. Next to the second revetment from the east, an underground bunker covered with earth and fitted with two chimneys had been built. Source believed that this bunker did not belong to the AA gun emplacement. On 20 November, construction work was being done in front of a hangar. Source believed that an aircraft revetment was being built there.
6. In late November and early December, source repeatedly observed the western hangar and determined that it was either empty or only lightly occupied. Formerly, the aircraft of the unit with pilots showing an advanced status of training had been housed in this hangar. Usually less activity than

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previously was going on at the southern of the two eastern hangars. Most activity was observed in front of the northern of the two eastern hangars.

7. On 2 December, A Soviet sentry armed with a carbine was posted outside of the fence near the fuel dump. Not far from that sentry another soldier was on guard for 1 1/2 hours hidden in the brushwood along the road and a third one was posted at the gap in the fence. On 27 November, two Soviet officers were seen in town. One of them was apparently being familiarized with the surroundings by the other. Trucks [redacted]

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8. On 21 November, some flights, apparently for testing purposes, were made at the field. Between 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. on 28 November, there was no flying although the weather was favorable. Between 5 p.m. and midnight on 3 December, flights of about 20 minutes duration were made. Flying continued although it started raining at 8 p.m. On 28 November, a bunker with a quartering capacity of about 30 men was observed in the southeastern corner of the field.

9. Between 10 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on 27 November, there was no air activity. Two aircraft were parked in the northeastern corner of the field. The hangars were closed. A fatigue detail with red-bordered black epaulets was constructing a log-house and doing earth work at the southeastern edge of the field. About 100 cement pipes were piled up there. On 14 December, 15 swept-back jet fighters were parked in front of the open southeastern hangar. All other hangars were closed. About 30 soldiers with red-bordered black epaulets drilled on the southern edge of the field. The AA gun emplacement was guarded by two sentries. The log-house near the AA gun emplacement was completed. 1

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10. Trucks identified at the field [redacted] driver wearing red-bordered black epaulets, [redacted] the two latter with drivers wearing black-bordered blue epaulets, [redacted] with driver wearing red-bordered black epaulets, and [redacted], and [redacted]

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1. [redacted] Comment. A fighter regiment, equipped with 30 to 35 MiG-15s, is believed to be stationed at Koethen airfield.

2. [redacted] Comment. Probably crates for ground ammunition.

3. [redacted] Comment. On 17 and 18 November, two trains which probably carried AAA units, were previously observed en route from Ustermark to Koethen. Probably source of the present report observed one of these trains. The present report, however, does not indicate an increase of AAA protection at Koethen airfield.

4. [redacted]

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